

...an Ariosto, and a Spenser, celebrated
of his in the immortal works of Scott,—
of course, these things have no interest for the
profound scholar and refined poet; and that is
the exact reason why: so many refined poets
and scholars have derided their lives to them;
why Alimé, Simonds, and Schlegel thought
them worth writing about; and why some of
the brightest intellects of our day are devoted
to their elucidation. Let us recommend your
correspondent to abandon his unseemable
ground; nor let his love for Solons and
Sappho lead him to forget the existence of
history. His boasted contrast is none at all,
the fair sense. Why, can he find no one,
under thousands of illustrious men of the
middle ages, better than a pig-headed
man, to compare with the astute Pericles?
Why is a "prejudice" for classic any
worse than a "prejudice" for the opposite,
especially as the latter is natural to us, and
the former only acquired.

In my opinion, St. Paul's, dome and all, is
not so much a head of our "gay young
place," nor can we exactly say where to put
the rival dome upon the latter if we would:
the dome, such as we understand it to mean,
is not a classic feature. Italian architecture
is not purely classic, and the dome is one of
those features which show how this mode of
it was affected by the opposite tendency to
the Greek. The dome is aspiring, elevating;
it arises from the operation of the same spirit
as does the Gothic architecture. In rearing
the dome, the mind of the artist struggles to
get away from the horizontal body lying
below, and to express its more sublime ideas.
In Oriental art—in Constantinople—the dome
figures very importantly, and we know there
is great affinity between the Oriental and the
Gothic. There is every reason, then, to believe
the dome natural enough to Gothic art; and
I suppose that is could be harmously de-
signed, without paying any attention to that
house "of nine out of ten of us" where-
with your correspondent occupies a long
paragraph. Indeed, alums is becoming so
common, that there is often more than enough
to balance the information contained in some
communications.

The church of Santa Maria del Fiore at
Florence has much of the Gothic spirit in it;
and possesses that celebrated dome which has
immortalized the name of Brunelleschi. I feel
half inclined to call attention to this dome as
an excellent model for a Gothic one; and be-
sides, we know it is real, and has no sham
interior, like St. Paul's.

The Florentine dome is certainly half Gothic
in spirit, probably more Gothic than any
other, and is a marvel of constructive skill.
It is therefore well worthy of the careful con-
sideration of those who would design a Gothic
dome.

H. T. B.

As the question of the introduction of an
entirely new feature in a style is a subject of
some importance, perhaps I may be allowed to
make a few remarks on the query started by a
correspondent in your last,—"Why may we
not have a Gothic dome?" The writer seemed
fully prepared for the smile of incredulity with
which such a question would probably be
met, as well as for the pity to be accorded
him by the "devotees of mediævalism." Now,
without any claim to, or desire for, such a
designations, I must yet be permitted to differ
from his opinions. And first, passing over the
question of precedent worship in the Greek
and Roman school of the last generation, and
in that of the present mediæval school, on the
supposition, for the sake of argument, that
their blind allegiance to precedent is alike, we
must pause at the notion that the present sys-
tem shows less of common manliness than that
of the "now old fashioned," but always elegant,
elevating, and poetic formalism" of the other;
and that "the modern Goth is less excusable
than the modern Greek, in so far that there
can never be set up for the mediæval remains
any thing like that claim upon the sympathies
of the refined poet or profound scholar, which
could never be denied to the relics of an age
from whose ruins all that is excellent in modern
taste and learning first arose." Now, I would

suggest that the class of persons here alluded
to form but a small portion of those for whom
architecture is intended, and even among them
still fewer would, I think, be found so wrapped
up in the mantle of antiquity as to be indif-
ferent to the claims of their own race and
country. I can find no reason why our fore-
fathers and their works should have less of our
sympathy than those of another totally dif-
ferent people, however excellent. Should men
of the Teutonic blood and their deeds be less
interesting to us than those of the Greek?

The excellence of the two races lies in different
ways, being affected by national character,
climate, and, above all, by religious belief: we
can never forget that we are northerners and
Christians. We may reverence a Solon or
Socrates, but not the less a mainly bishop: we
may admire a Pericles the Grand, as well as a
knightly baron, the very personification of the
noble spirit of chivalry; or delight in the
breathing marbles of Attica and Augustan
Rome, and not less in the expressive effigy of
the northern saint or crusader: we may, in
fact, admire, as it were at a distance, the
matchless works of another race, another cli-
mate, and of a creed essentially earthly, though
in its most beautiful guise; but must we not at
the same time both admire and love those of
our own northern ancestors, unmistakably
telling of their faith as of ours,—one not
earthly, but heavenly? But to come to the
dome,—and to the fundamental principles of
the style to which it is proposed to be applied.
The leading feature of the Gothic style, both in
theory and actually, is undeniably that of ver-
ticality—unrest: everything must subserve to
this: arches, buttresses, pinnacles, the sky
line of the roof as a contrast, the tapering
spire and pinnacled tower—all aspire; immo-
bility is its very antithesis. All round-arched
or trefoiled styles, on the contrary, more or
less unmistakably tell of rest: horizontality
is the general effect: the opposite of their
teaching is aspiration. Now, admitting this,
can a dome be made to aspire? Is it of its
nature? What is the effect of St. Paul's?
Grandeur, dignity, and beauty, I grant it, but
not aspiration; the reverse: it crowns all: in
it everything centres immovably,—it is the
summit of all,—the whole structure, as it were,
rests on it: aspiration is indeed its principle—
but that of the round arch,—and this expression
repose quite as much as the principle of trefoi-
lure. The dome cannot exist as a crowning
member without thus absorbing all into itself.
An octagonal dome would be more in accord-
ance if possible with Gothic principles, but I
cannot but think that it loses much of its
simplicity and grandeur, as well as that mar-
vellous play of light on a cylindrical surface,
without expressing verticality much more than
the other, or forfeiting its claim to be the crown
of all around. "K." lays the foundation of
his Gothic dome by supposing the peristyle
formed of piers and arches, and the addition
of pinnacles and buttresses all as contributing
to the verticality. Now, if, as I have supposed,
the glory of the dome consists in its absorbing
everything, and forbidding to look beyond
itself, then horizontality is its expression, and
consequently arches (pointed), buttresses, and
pinnacles but mar that effect: to that the ques-
tion is simply this,—What is the expression
of a dome? "K." proceeds all along on the
supposition that the principle of verticality is
essential to it. To my own mind I must say
that it affords any other idea than that of the
aspiring or vertical. Should, then, the ex-
pected smile of incredulity come from those
who think with me as to the expression of the
dome, it will arise not from the fact that pre-
cedent does not afford an example, but from
the conviction that dignified and beautiful as
is the feature proposed to be introduced, it is
yet of its very essence opposed to the leading
characteristics of Pointed architecture.—R.

Your correspondent "K." has handled this
subject with ability; but I need hardly remind
you that the entire design he propounds at the
close of his communication (arcuated peri-
style, pinnacles and all) has been already
realized in the construction of the Cathedral
Church at Pisa.

FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

Vienne Art-Union.—The Austrian associa-
tion exhibited the art-works destined for the
distribution of prizes to take place on the 31st
of October. The selection is considered a
good one, although not quite one of perfect
impartiality. 136 works have been purchased
at an expense of 22,340 florins. Landscape
oil paintings form the greater part, amongst
which Achenbach's Swedish scenery is most
appreciated.

Berlin.—*Lepsius on Egypt.*—At the late
meeting of the Royal Society at Berlin, the
above-mentioned read a memoir on the first god-
circle (*götterkreis*) of the Egyptians. In con-
tradiction to Herodotus, Professor Lepsius
Oiris in the first circle of divinities, in accord-
ance with the opinion of Manetho. The
development of the Osiris worship out of the
pure pantheistic belief of the sun-worship, its
ulterior development into Ammon-worship, the
revolutionary reformation of the fourth Amen-
phibis, and the final reversion towards a tran-
scendental sun-worship were most accurately
and graphically delineated by M. Lepsius. He
concluded by proving how these philosophical
systems came to naught in the reign of subse-
quent foreign conquerors and kings.

New Art Works.—M. Decker, the eminent
Berlin publisher, has been travelling of late
over Germany for the sake of forming engage-
ments with engravers relating to his intended
publication of Kumbach's frescoes in the new
Berlin Museum. First-rate talent has been
engaged for this national work amongst
the engravers of Dresden, Munich, Nürn-
berg, &c. It will appear in largest folio, and
many of the plates will be in colour.—The
French Government have assigned a sum of
300,000 francs towards the publication of the
Assyrian antiquities collected by Botta and
other French travellers, and which, under
Louis Philippe, were kept in the cellars of the
Louvre. Notwithstanding this large grant,
the publisher has been allowed to charge for
one copy any sum not exceeding 1,200 francs.
The French *experts* are in hope that such a
large series of Assyrian antiquities characters as
will be copied in the *Antiquités* will probably
contribute towards their ultimate deciphering,
which, as they are hieratic and not symbolic or
hieroglyphic characters, may be accomplished
ere long.

Rome.—The Museo Lateranense founded by
Gregory XVI. is progressing, and increasing
satisfactorily. In the splendid spaces of the
Atrio, which had been constructed under
Sixtus V. out of the old patriarchal palace, many
ancient inscriptions, columns, fragments, and
cippi are now deposited. Besides many Ro-
man and old Christian sarcophagi, the statues of
Antonius from the villa of Adrian near Tivoli,
the antique Neptune, the Dancing Faun,
the bust of Sophocles from Tivoli are to be
seen; moreover, a specimen, perhaps unique
in its way, the statue of a slave, which, merely
characteristic, has been dug up in some foundations
near the Collegio Germanico. Amongst the
latest acquisitions are eight statues of superior
workmanship, found in the Augustæum of the
Municipium of Corne, representing members
of the family of Octavian. These constant
discoveries on classic ground show that, much
as has been hitherto discovered, much is yet
to be found.

Later Art Discoveries on the Rhine.—The
chief altar-piece of the Cologne Cathedral is
one of great renown, and it has been always
regretted that no more works of the same great
master were in existence. A picture, how-
ever, has been discovered, of late, in the epis-
copal seminary of that city, which, from its
character and expression, as well as the parti-
cular management of the drapery, points to a
work of that great master. The picture
represents the Virgin in life size, dressed in a
red cloak, holding in her right arm the infant
Christ covered with a veil: at her feet kneels
the foundress of the picture in a peculiar
sort of costume. The canvas is well pre-
served, save the background and parts of the
head, which have been slightly *retrouvé*, but
admit of an easy restoration.